

A True RELATION of the Curfed Designs and Intrigues

Which have been lately carry'd on

Both in England and France

T O

Restore the late King James;

With the *French Kings* Speech to the late King: And an Account of the Miserable, and almost Starving Condition of several *Protestants* in France, who have unfortunately adhered to the Interest of King James.

Discovered by some Gentlemen lately arrived from St. Germain.

THE following Relation was had from Gentlemen of very good Note, who have seen most of the Transactions at St. Germain for about four Years last past: It gives a very impartial Account of Affairs, and shews the Connexion of Foreign and Domestick Intrigues, carried on and managed with restless Industry now for about two Tears last past, in order to the Restoration of the late King; which, at last, turned to no better Account, than to put a period to his Expectations, by leaving him but small or no Hopes to return ever again, as will plainly appear; the Truth whereof will want no Confirmation: For farther Enquiry into Foreign Affairs, will remove all Doubts, and leave no room for Contradiction.

ABOUT two Years since the late King had great hopes to be restored with Triumph, and fed himself with the thoughts of being an absolute Monarch, having about that Time received great Encouragement, as well from the Pope, as from the French King, which made him look above the Reach of his late Subjects, (as he thought) and to reject all my Lord Preston's Undertakings, and the rest concerned in that Intrigue; which was like to have cost my Lord Preston his Life, and for which he had no Thanks; but on the contrary, was despised for meddling; the late King protesting then, that he had rather never see England, than come to treat or capitulate with his Subjects again: But he soon altered his Resolution, seeing Affairs abroad thwart his Designs; and meeting with such unexpected Disappointments, which abated much of the Thoughts he retained but a little before; so that of a sudden Motion, he with great Impatience consulted some of his Protestant Council, telling them that he was resolved to treat with his late Subjects, and give them any Conditions, rather than stand out any longer, concluding that nothing would more conduce to his Restoration, than to reconcile himself to his late Subjects.

In order thereto an Express was sent to England, with Instructions to my Lord Middleton, and some others, to treat with the People, and to know their Inclinations by feeling how their Pulses beat, and accordingly to proceed: Which my Lord Middleton did, and drew a Declaration answerable to the Desires of the Churchmen of England and Ireland, and some other Heads of both the Kingdoms: And after some Debates, my Lord Middleton went away for France, and arrived at St. Germain the beginning of March, or thereabouts.

He produced the Declaration, which admitted of long Arguments *pro* and *con*, as their Interests moved the Ministers of St. Germain: My Lord Melford started several Cases of Conscience against the late King's signing the said Declaration; insomuch that to be satisfied therein, and to remove all Scruples of Conscience, the late King consulted the Colledge of Sorbon, and the Irish Colledge likewise. The Faculty of Sorbon declared against the said Declaration, and the Irish Colledge likewise.

The Irish Colledge gave these Reasons, That the King

was in Exile, banished his Kingdoms by his own Children and Subjects for his Religion; that as the Case stood with him, there was no Remedy for his Restoration left him, but to comply with his Subjects, and to sign any Instrument whatever, for to prevail with them for to accept of him home again; and whatever he should sign whilst in Exile, and under Tribulation abroad, he should not in Conscience be obliged to perform after his Restoration, as exacted from him per Force and Duress; which renders all Conditions and Agreements of that kind, neither Obligatory nor Binding, any longer than a fit Opportunity should offer it self to break them; [and wherein he would but imitate his Brother Charles II. who took the Covenant in Scotland, and after his Restoration burnt it at London, by the Hands of the common Hangman.] The Faculty of Sorbon declared against this kind of Machiavelian Doctrine, and against the Declaration too: Yet notwithstanding the late King did sign the said Declaration on the Consideration aforesaid. But my Lord Melford and my Lord Middleton fell out, and are to this day irreconcilable; they do not contend for any Good either of them would do to this Side or that Side; but their Quarrel is like that of Caesar and Pompey, who should be the Greatest, not the Best: But Melford (a Convert in Words, under the shadow of Religion) bears the Sway, *Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum*.

The said Declaration so signed by the late King, was ordered to be sent into Flanders, to be read there at the Head of the Irish Troops; but was to them the most unwelcome and unacceptable Message that ever they met withall, or that the late King could send them, finding by the said Declaration, that they lost themselves both at Home and Abroad, by the late King; which caused such a Consternation in the Camp, that the Souldiers (who would be glad of any Occasion to quit the Service and to return Home) openly mutinied; having started the Question, that now being deserted by King James, why should they not go over to King William, and accept of Conditions? But the Question was carried in the Negative, & an express sent immediately to St. Germain, to let the late King know the Discontent amongst the Souldiers, and the Disorder in the Camp occasioned by the said Declaration. Here King James returns to himself again, and after his old Custom of Doing and Undoing, gets another Declaration drawn, signs the same, to null the former, and sends away two Gentlemen and two Clergymen of Note with this new Declaration for Flanders, to pacify the Irish, and to give them Content; which for some days gave them some Satisfaction, but not so much as to harbour a good Thought of the late King, believing that if ever he should be restored, they would be all lost through his Unconstancy; and that by reposing their Trust in him, they confided in a rotten Reed: but however they were appeased for that time.

Here the late King, forgetting his last Declaration and Protestation to the Irish, sends the first Declaration for England without any Amendment, or taking any notice of the last Declaration to the Irish; but with the former Exception a-

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gainst them, he lets it pass for *England*. Here (as they relate it Abroad) it was published the 19th. of May last; but several not believing the same to be the late King's Declaration, but the Product of some other Invention to amuse the People, seem'd disgusted at it, and would give it no Credit: But that the People may be undeceived in the said Declaration, notice was sent to *St. Germain's* what the People said about it; and immediately to remove all Doubts touching the same, the late King caused it to be put in the *Paris Gazette*, where (to his great Dishonour and Disadvantage) it was published by Authority, which gave Content in *England*, and great Discontent to the *Irish Army*, who are ever since in great Disorder about it: but the King of *France* has promised to see them righted, who are all very unruly and weary of King *James*, (except some Officers that cannot live so well at Home, as in their Station Abroad) and willing to quit the Service upon any reasonable Conditions whatsoever; especially the common Souldiers, who are extraordinary poor and dissatisfied, would give any thing to be at Home.

The Nobility and Gentry of *France* finding a Declaration of King *James's* in the *Paris Gazette*, were surprized at it; and seeing him desert the *Roman Catholick* Interest, did look upon it as very great Unconstancy of Resolution, which in truth removed the Interest and Affection of the Clergy and Nobility of *France* from him, who, before that Publication, were all resolved for him, and to promote his Restauration to their Power; but since are grown cold upon the Matter, and are indifferent whether he be restored or not. In the Court of *France* the late King is extremely much made of; but had he more Constancy of Mind, he would be much better looked upon there, where nothing else but Resolution is in Esteem.

The said Declaration, it seems, had such Effects, that some have been pleased to send away a draught of Articles or Conditions, contained, as reported from Abroad, under twelve Heads, which the late King, in farther Confirmation of his good Will to the Party he relies on, hath in September last signed, as they say that came from thence. Since the return of the said Articles for *England* signed, they say Abroad, that Preparations have been diligently used for the Restauration of the late King.

And that in December last an Express arrived from *England* at *St. Germain's*, which gave the satisfactory account of the Peoples Return to their former Allegiance to King *James*: how true or false it was, that Court was so elevated with Joy, that nothing was talked off, but an immediate Return for *England*, all there striving who should be foremost upon the Expedition; others, to make some considerable Figure, came away, as they say, to have some Men in readiness against the Landing here in *England*. Frequent fresh News came from *England*, confirming the same; and every half-starved poor Man about Court used his Interest to have some considerable Employment; and he that could not be in a valuable Station thought himself as good as lost: by which we may judge how the *Jacobites* here in *England* would be look'd on. But it's thought the late King would continue his Favour to them, by leaving them always reserved to drink his Health, an Employment most suitable to their Principles; for certainly they that live in so merry a mode in his Absence, cannot but do extraordinary well when he returns, that is to say, if their Money holds out, otherwise they may become *Williamites*.

About this time *France* was as full of the Expectation of a general Peace to be concluded all abroad, as other Places were full of the Rumour thereof; and to stay for the Ratification, was alledged to be the only stop that prolonged the late King's coming away, having all things at Home and Abroad ready, doubting not in the least but all things would have answered Expectation. But all the Preparations turned to nothing, and the great Joy, of a sudden to Sorrow, insomuch that all the Tydings at Home and Abroad met together, in the Dissolution of the Hopes of a second Restauration.

The late King about the fourth of February last, New Style, acquainted the *French King* with the frequent good

Tydings from his late Subjects, who now were returned to their Allegiance, and all free to hazard their Fortunes for his Return, which he said, were all owing to his Intelligence, and that he was most certain and sure that none would oppose him in *England*; the *French King* told him, that he was glad to hear it, and wished it might prove so, but seem'd to give little Credit to it.

The late K. pressed hard to have some Succours to come for *England* the beginning of last March, but still the *French King* doubted the Reality of the *English* to him, alledging thus, as K. *James* repeated the same after his Return from *Versailles* to *St. Germain's*:

First, says the *French King*, As you have Experience to know your Subjects, so I know them by their Character, and do believe them to be a People of no Faith, no Honour, and no Honesty, whom no Promise can oblige, nor Oath can bind: And as for their Clergy, I look upon them much worse than the Commonalty, having not only by Teaching and Preaching taught the People to forswear themselves, but shewed ill Examples in themselves by doing the same; they have sworn Allegiance to you, and since accepted of the Prince of Orange for their King, and swear Allegiance to him; how this Swearing to both can be reconciled, I cannot understand: But let them swear what they will I should not believe them, nor put any more Value upon their Oath than they do themselves, which is nothing at all. Neither do I understand how you can be assured of them that have no other Assurance to give you of their future Fidelity but their Oaths, which are worth as much now, as when they broke with your Majesty last; it is out of my reach to put any Trust in such People, neither would I have you confide in them, for I doubt much their Integrity; and if they are weary of the War at a Distance, what will they not be when it's with them at Home? that will be your time to hear them, and not before.

The late King still urged to come for *England*.

Whereupon the *French King* told him, Seeing he had that Confidence in his Subjects, that if they did but demonstrate their Fidelity by some Action, as the seizing of any Citadel, Town or Port of any good Consequence, and put such in his Hands as might be for the Safety of his Ships, and secure the Landing of an Army; that after that was effectually done, he would give him Succours; but before he did not think it safe to venture, considering how his own Affairs stood at Home and Abroad. The late King pressed no further upon him, but returned to *St. Germain's*, where he told all the Particulars, which put that Court into such a Fit of Grief and Sorrow, that they were all like so many People going to die. In five days after all the decayed Gentlemen about Court were ordered some Advance Mony upon their Pensions, and commanded Homeward, to make the best of their Way and Conditions, who are now upon the Road for *Flanders*, others coming for *England*, and the rest beginning all along, being in a most deplorable Condition.

The *English-Protestants* about that Court do wish themselves at Home again, for there they are respected as Strangers, but hated as Protestants, and looked upon as Spies from *England*; so are some *Roman-Catholicks* too, who thereupon, both Clergy and Laity, were forbid the Court.

The Protestants are hated likewise by the People there, who have the same Notion of Religion, if not with more Zeal, as the People here: The Protestants are under the Calumnies of the late King's Declaration, and the Articles both against *Roman-Catholicks* and Dissenters; and the *English-Protestants* about Court on that account are loathed and hated by the People there, who are full of it. For *English-Protestants* to go for *France*, to propagate their Religion, where a Native Protestant cannot live, is but like the Quakers that went to Rome to reconcile the Pope to be a Quaker; they are equally looked upon, though not equally treated; the Quakers were looked upon in Rome to be Madmen, and were sent to *Bedlam*, but our *English-Protestants* are yet at Liberty, and in more danger of the Bastile than of *Bedlam*, being of late upon their good Behaviour, but still much suspected. Licensed according to Order.